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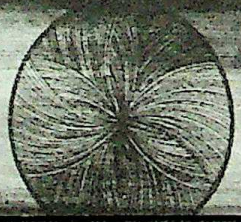
ORIENTAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE & MANUSCRIPTS LIBRARY

UNIVERSITY OF KERALA

KARIAVATTOM.

Unveiling the glorious history of 100 years....,



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Oriental Research Institute and Manuscript Library is an academic department of the University of Kerala. It has a history of about a century, and now done substantial work in the field of Indological studies. It has come in to existence out of Royal interest. The Kings of Travancore, as a ruler , was valorous as well as lovers of art and literature. H.H SreeMoolam Tirunal was mainly responsible for the spread of Oriental literature throughout the world. It was he who instituted the department for the publication of Oriental manuscripts which in due course grew in to the present institution.

Situated at the beautiful scenario of Kariavattom campus, the Department is symbolically the converging point of Eastern and Western architecture. The building became a reality, due to the timely efforts of former Central Minister , Dr. S. Karan Singh. His dreams came true in 1982, when the department was officially inaugurated at Kariavattom.

Our Treasured Possessions

- This institution is considered to be the first largest Manuscript Library of our country having more than 65,000 Manuscripts.
- Majority of the Manuscripts are in the form of palm leaf.
- Our collection is unique for their vastness in number, variety of subjects, scripts, language and writing materials.
- Philosophy, Mimamsa, Nyaya, Mantra, Tantra, Astronomy., Vedas, Upanishat, Ayurvedic Medicine, Jyothisha, Shilpa, Srauta, Music, Smritis and various forms of literature like Kavya, Nataka, Itihasa, Puranas, Attakkatha, Tullal and Folklores are found in our collection.
- The languages include Sanskrit, Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Hindi, Oriya, Burmese, Bengali, Indonesian etc.
- The scripts found in the Manuscripts vary from Grantha, Nandinagari, Vattezhuttu, Kolezhuttu, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Devanagari, Burmese, Bengali and Marathi so on.

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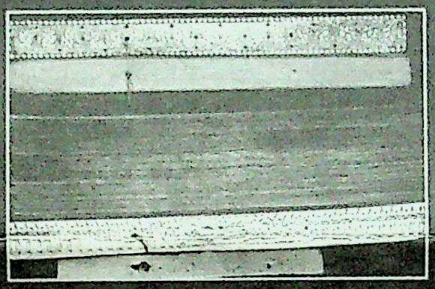
Narayaneeyam

Written in praise of Lord Vishnu by Melputtur Narayana Bhattathiri. Received as a gift from the granthappura attached to the Royal Palace of the Travancore King. Written in AD 1738 (ME 913)

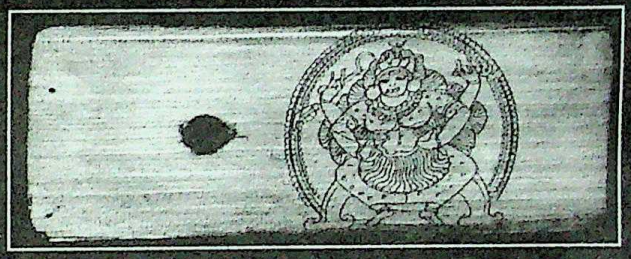
Srimad Bhagavatham



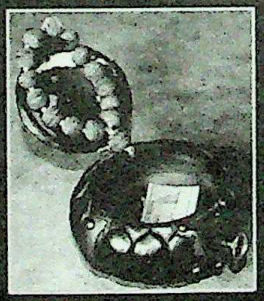
Complete Bhagavata written in Malayalam Script. The planks have been made in ivory, with beautiful carving of the Tutelary deity on both sides and the inner side of the Ivory plank has been beautifully coloured using natural colours, the technique in unknown to the present generation.

Roopaprasna

One of the astrological Manuscripts used for predicting one's future by choosing the folio.



Rudrakshmala



Palm-leaf has been cut in round and strung like beeds (Rudraksha), a very rare work in a wooden box.

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Functions of the Department.

Trifold Functions.

a. Collection of Manuscripts is an on going programme from Palaces, Illams, Tharavadus, Manas and from individuals.

b. Preservation
   Oiling, Fumigation and Digitisation

c. Academic activities
   * Editing and Publishing the Manuscripts.
   * Teaching
   *Research

Present Faculty

Dr. K. G. Sreelekha (Prof. & Head)
Dr. N. Sam
Smt. R. Girija
Dr. O. Padmakumari

Courses Offered

- MA Elective in Manuscriptology
- M Phil Manuscriptology
- Ph.D Sanskrit , Malayalam and Tamil

Areas of Research: Manuscriptology, Palaeography, Principles of Textual Criticism, Teaching Ancient Scripts and Critical edition of Manuscripts.

Consultancy: Provides literary information, materials for research and knowledge of ancient scripts to researchers and public.

Perspectives for the future

* Expeditious publications for manuscripts
* Reprint of earlier publications.
* Preparation of Descriptive Catalogue both subject as well as language wise, with the Financial assistance of National Mission for Manuscripts, New Delhi.
*Resource mobilization and securing financial support from external sources.
*Publication of subject wise indices of Sanskrit , Malayalam and Tamil Manuscripts.

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SAVE THE MANUSCRIPTS.

SAVE THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE.